

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please cancel Claims 2-44 without prejudice or disclaimer of any scope or subject matter.

**REMARKS**

This Preliminary Amendment is submitted to enter amendments and information, and is responsive in any other manner indicated below.

**PENDING/ALLOWED CLAIMS**

Claims 1-44 were pending upon filing of the above-identified application.. Claims 2-44 have been cancelled in order to reduce initial filing fees prior to Applicant's submission of claims directed to the invention for consideration and examination in this case. **Applicant respectfully notifies the Office that a Supplemental Preliminary Amendment containing claims directed to the invention to be examined in this case is to be filed.** At entry of this paper, Claim 1 is pending.

**PRIORITIES UNDER §§119 AND 120**

Applicant has herein amended the specification to identify the prior application upon which benefit is claimed in the present continuation under §120, and respectfully requests acknowledgment of same from the USPTO. Upon receipt of further information, Applicant will revise the specification further.

Applicant also claims priority under §119 of JP 10-255484 filed 9 September 1998; JP 10-233826 filed 20 August 1998; and JP 10-195951 filed 13 July 1998.

Certified copies of the priority documents were filed in the prior application identified above. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests acknowledgment of Applicant's claim under §119 in the present continuation case.

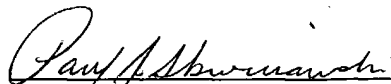
### ASSIGNEE OF ENTIRE INTEREST

HITACHI LTD. is Assignee of entire right, title and interest in the present continuation application by virtue of the Assignment filed in prior Application No. 09/351,130 and recorded on 12 July 1999 at Reel 010109, Frames 0492 *et seq.*

### CONCLUSION

This Preliminary Amendment is filed concurrently with the application to which it pertains, and is therefore timely. No Petition for extension of time for submission of this Amendment is possible. Please charge any other appropriate and requisite fee for entry of this Amendment to ATS&K Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (as Order No. 500.37389CX1).

Respectfully submitted,



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